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THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 80/NO. 26 JULY 18, 2016

Washington covers up civilian drone deaths

BY MARK THOMPSON

In the best tradition of the manipulation of casualty figures during the U.S. war on Vietnam, the U.S. Office of the Director of National Intelligence claimed July 1 that at most 116 civilians have died during 473 aerial drone and missile strikes that killed 2,500 alleged "enemy combatants" over the seven years since President Barack Obama took office. The figures only include pilotless strikes "outside areas of active hostilities" — in other words, where there are no U.S. combat operations.

Most of the strikes took place in northwest Pakistan with others in

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Protest denial of 'Militant' to subscribers in Florida prisons

BY JOHN STUDER

Authorities at two Florida state prisons recently impounded two issues of the *Militant* claiming that the paper is a "threat to the security, good order, or discipline of the correctional system."

"We intend to fight these moves and defend the right of workers behind bars to get the *Militant* and other political literature," said Naomi Craine, the paper's managing editor, in an appeal for support.

The *Militant*'s attorney David Goldstein from the law firm of Rabinowitz, Boudin, Standard, Krinsky & Lieberman — well-known for its

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Locked out Honeywell workers: 'We won't accept union busting'



Militant/Betsy Farley

June 30 expanded picket backing UAW Local 9 in fight against lockout at Honeywell.

BY BETSY FARLEY AND TERI HARRINGTON

SOUTH BEND, Ind. — Locked-out members of United Auto Workers Local 9 rallied at the gate of the Honeywell aerospace plant here June 30. They were joined by members of the Steelworkers, SEIU and the Laborers Union. The 200 participants sang "Solidarity Forever" as scabs from Strom Engineering were brought out of the plant in buses.

Honeywell locked the workers out May 9 after they voted down a contract that would increase medical costs and strip away seniority rights. "They want to make us pay $114 a week for health care with an $8,000 deductible," said Bryan Rodgers, Local 9 recording secretary. "They're proposing a 270-day probation period, when now we have 60. We will not accept a union-busting contract."

"We're still fighting for unemployment benefits," Rodgers said. Another rally is planned for July 18. Send donations and solidarity messages to UAW Local 9, 740 Michigan St., South Bend, IN 46601.

The authors are members of USW Local 1010 in East Chicago, Indiana.

Inside

'We are worth so much more than a paycheck'



Militant photos: Left, Maggie Trowe; right, Jacob Perasso

Left, SWP presidential candidate Alyson Kennedy with miner Gonzalo Salazar in Huntington, Utah, July 4. Both were leaders of strike at Co-Op mine there in 2003-04. Right, Val Johnson, right, talks with Cathy Charlebois, a teacher in Vergenes, Vermont, July 2.

SWP candidate: 'Workers can organize all of society'

BY MAGGIE TROWE

PRICE, Utah — Socialist Workers Party presidential candidate Alyson Kennedy joined campaigners for the party going door to door across Utah in this coal-rich region July 3-5. She talked with workers deeply affected by mine closures and layoffs. Official unemployment here in Carbon County is 6.3 percent, well above the state average of 3.8 percent.

Kennedy knows the area well. She lived here from 2002 to 2006 and worked as a coal miner. In 2003 workers at the Co-Op mine in Huntington went on strike to demand representation by the United Mine Workers and to protest the firing of a worker active in their organizing drive. Kennedy helped lead the strike. On this trip she got together with several strike veterans and their families.

"We gained confidence and made the bosses a little afraid of us," Gon-

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100s get books, meet Socialist Workers Party

BY PATRICK BROWN

RUTLAND, Vt. — "Our society is based on money, but we are worth so much more than we make in a paycheck," said Amber Ricard, 35, an auto reconditioning worker here, as she bought *Are They Rich Because They're Smart? Class, Privilege and Learning Under Capitalism.* She got a copy of the *Militant* and exchanged contact information with the campaigners for the Socialist Workers Party who had knocked on her door.

Party branches across the country have taken quotas to sell 1,750 copies of *Are They Rich Because They're Smart?* between now and Aug. 22 as part of a far-reaching campaign to

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SWP WINS VICTORY, IS ON WASHINGTON BALLOT! — page 7

Quebec court gives green light to frame-up trial of rail worker

BY JOHN STEELE

MONTREAL — Quebec Superior Court Justice Gaétan Dumas at a June 22 hearing refused to dismiss charges against locomotive engineer Tom Harding, framed up for the explosion of a runaway train in downtown Lac-Mégantic, Quebec, on July 6, 2013.

For the first time, prosecutors finally spelled out the details of their allegations against Harding and train controller Richard Labrie, two years after they were both charged with 47 counts of criminal negligence causing death, one count for each of the people who died. The two are members of United Steelworkers Local 1976. Former Montreal, Maine and Atlantic Railway official Jean Demaitre faces similar charges. The case is expected to go to trial sometime in 2017.

The railway was also initially charged with criminal negligence. During the hearing the lawyer for the now bankrupt company, whose assets have been sold off, asked to be excused from the case saying he is not receiving clear direction.

The "petition to quash" by Harding's attorney Thomas Walsh said that the prosecutor has repeatedly denied Harding access to information needed for his defense. "For three years the actions of the [prosecutor] guarantees that there will not be a fair trial," Walsh said at the hearing.

The night of the disaster, Harding — the only crew member because the government's Transport Canada agency allowed the railroad to run oil trains with a one-person crew — carried out the company's procedures he had been following for years. After his 12-hour shift Harding parked the train on an inclined track seven miles from Lac-Mégantic, left the lead engine running to power its air brakes, set hand brakes on seven cars and took a cab to a hotel in Lac-Mégantic.

A fire started in the engine after Harding left. When the firefighters put it out they shut down the engine — and the air brakes began bleeding out. When called by the train dispatcher about the fire Harding offered to go check the equipment. He was told to go back to sleep, that everything was in hand. Unknown to Harding a track manager without knowledge of engines had been sent to check things out.

Later he was awoken by the explosion. He helped firefighters uncouple and move other tanker cars that could have exploded. Many in Lac-Mégantic consider him a hero.

The prosecution's just released "Theory of the Case" lists the specific basis for the charges. It alleges that Harding did not set enough hand brakes; he relied only on the locomotive air brakes despite the dangerous cargo, and did not conduct a required brake test; and after learning the engine had been shut down he did not inform his superiors that the train was not secure without the air brakes, or return to verify the stability of the train after a fire on the engine was put out.

According to a Transportation Safety Board report on the disaster, even if Harding had set hand brakes on nine tanker cars, as suggested in the company rule book, the train would have still rolled because at least 17 were needed.

In addition, "you can't do a proper break test with one person," Canadian Pacific Railway locomotive engineer Chris Yeandel, who works out of Montreal, told the *Militant*. "You need the engineer in the cab and the conductor on the ground who has to verify that the wheels have stopped moving after the slack adjustment. You can't do this with a one person crew."

Need for solidarity

In April the provincial leadership of the British Columbia Hospital Employees' Union adopted a motion of solidarity with Harding and Labrie and donated $500 to their defense. "This is about helping the legal defense of these workers who are being framed and being made scapegoats," said Betty Valenzuela, a member of the union's provincial executive and secretary treasurer of the Vancouver General Hospital Employees' Union local.

Send solidarity messages to USW Local 1976 / Section locale 1976, 2360 De Lasalle, Suite 202, Montreal, QC H1V 2L1. Email: info@1976usw.ca. Send copies to: Thomas Walsh, 165 Rue Wellington N., Suite 310, Sherbrooke, QC Canada J1H 5B9. Email: thomaspwalsh@hotmail.com. Contributions for Harding and Labrie's defense can be sent in Canada to Syndicat des Métallos, 565, boulevard Crémazie Est, bureau 5100, Montreal, QC H2M 2V8. In the U.S. send checks to Tom Harding Defense Fund, First Niagara Bank, 25 McClellan Drive, Nassau, NY 12123.

Puerto Rico: 'It's not the junta, it's the colony'



"The problem is not the junta, it's the colony," and "the debt is with the people" (above) read banners at protests outside the U.S. District Court in San Juan, Puerto Rico, June 29, after the U.S. Senate approved the Puerto Rico Oversight, Management and Economic Stability Act, placing control of the island's finances in the hands of a seven-member board that will be appointed by President Barack Obama. Since then supporters of independence for Puerto Rico have held daily pickets as well as a tent encampment at the courthouse.

To "restructure" the colonial government's $72 billion debt and ensure that wealthy bondholders get paid, the board will have the power to enforce a ban on strikes by public workers, reduce the minimum wage of $7.25 an hour to $4.25 for workers 25 years and younger, and impose criminal penalties on anyone who fails to carry out its decisions.

"The people have never been part of the decisions that brought the economic crisis," Gabriela Báez, 18, who has been part of the encampment, told the *Militant* by phone from San Juan July 5. "It's time to speak out and tell the whole world: this is a colony and we have to oppose it."

— ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

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The Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018. **Telephone:** (212) 244-4899
Fax: (212) 244-4947
E-mail: themilitant@mac.com
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Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the *Militant*'s views. These are expressed in editorials.

Obama executive order or not, immigrant workers face fight

BY EMMA JOHNSON

The U.S. Supreme Court in a divided vote June 23 overturned an executive order by President Barack Obama that gave shaky legal status to undocumented immigrants whose children are U.S. citizens or permanent residents. At best the order would have made it possible for 4 million adults to apply for three-year work permits and temporarily not face deportation if they could pass a background check.

At a press conference after the ruling, Obama said he issued the November 2014 executive order because he "was left with little choice" in his goal of making "our immigration system smarter, fairer, and more just" after he was unable to get immigration legislation passed by Congress.

"I have pushed to the limits of my executive authority," Obama said, washing his hands of any further attempt to regularize the status of immigrant workers.

The 4-4 tie by the U.S. Supreme Court left in place a district court ruling barring the government from implementing so-called deferred action for parents. A related program, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, continues. Under this program 730,000 immigrants who came to the U.S. as children have received two-year renewable work permits.

While Obama portrays himself as a friend of immigrants, he has continued the policies of presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush before him. At the June 23 press conference Obama boasted that since he took office "we've deployed more border agents and technology to our southern border than ever before." Since 1995 the number of border patrol agents have gone from 5,000 to 20,000. Much of the border with Mexico is lined with fences or under surveillance from drones and scanners.

It was the Bush administration that ended factory raids; the last major raid was in Postville, Iowa, in mid-2008. More and more raids had been met by protests, with significant participation by Black, Caucasian and other U.S.-born workers. During many factory raids, these workers helped their undocumented co-workers escape.

This was a consequence of the massive protests by mostly Mexican immigrant workers that exploded with a nationwide strike of more than 2 million on May 1, 2006, and that continued for several years, winning the respect of their fellow workers.

The U.S. government used other methods to regulate the flow of immigrant labor, which it needs to push down the value of labor power.



Casa de Maryland

Demonstration at the White House, Dec. 30, 2015, protested Obama administration's immigration arrest and deportation of families and children from Central America.

The E-Verify program, which checks the immigration status of potential hires, has skyrocketed from about 10,000 workplaces a decade ago to 600,000 today, making it harder for workers without papers to get jobs. Some 1,400 bosses join E-Verify every week. Washington has also expanded the use of immigration "audits."

Under Bush and then Obama, the immigration police shifted its main method of deportation from so-called voluntary departures to "removals," meaning anyone deported faces felony charges and jail time if they return to the U.S. Instead of factory raids, immigration cops targeted alleged "criminal aliens" in homes or on the street, often catching workers whose only crime was living in the U.S. without legal documents.

The number of undocumented workers peaked at 12.2 million in 2007. Beginning from 2007-2009, the economic crisis made coming to the U.S. less attractive. As a result, combined with increased enforcement measures, the numbers dropped to less than 11 million today. The number of deportations last year was the lowest since 1971.

An exception was a sharp increase in the number of children and families fleeing gang violence and depression conditions in Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador in 2014. In a practical demonstration of what Obama means by a "fairer" immigration policy, his administration put in place what he called "a sustained border security surge" to turn them back at the U.S.-Mexico border or lock them up indefinitely upon arrival.

Department of Homeland Security officials — who oversee the immigration cops — have said overturning Obama's executive order will not change any of their priorities or make deportations of "noncriminal" immigrants a priority.

Washington covers up civilian drone deaths

Continued from front page

Libya, Somalia and Yemen. The figures do not include Afghanistan, Iraq or Syria, where U.S. troops are on the ground. The report admits that nongovernmental organizations that have tried to verify the number of civilians killed believe the U.S. figures are false.

According to the *New York Times*, "The administration's count of civilian deaths is about half of the lowest estimate from independent watchdogs." The Washington-based Long War Journal, which the *Times* says has the lowest estimates, said there were 207 deaths in Pakistan and Yemen alone. The London-based Bureau of Investigative Journalism estimates that the number of civilian casualties could be as high as 801.

The National Intelligence office did not provide any breakdown by year or country, much less a strike-by-strike account, making it virtually impossible for anyone to challenge how the figures were determined.

The drone strikes are organized by the CIA and the U.S. military's Joint Special Operations Command. They were pioneered by the White House under President George W. Bush as part of the "war on terror" following 2001, but accelerated under Obama, who championed them as a "surgical" alternative to traditional airstrikes and ground combat. A *Times* article last year noted that operators who direct the missiles by computer from the state of Nevada "often do not know who they are killing."

Obama has involved himself intimately in directing the drone attacks, as part of promoting a military perspective that is supposed to avoid "boots on the ground" and minimize U.S. casualties. This includes using airstrikes, special operations forces and local forces, and was meant to lead to a withdrawal of U.S. troops from the Middle East. Despite this, 9,800 U.S. troops remain in Afghanistan, more than 4,000 are in Iraq and 300 have been sent to Syria.

In June the White House approved a more aggressive use of U.S. troops and airstrikes in Afghanistan. It also said it was "not ruling out" sending hundreds of additional troops to Iraq. Civilian deaths in these two wars number in the tens of thousands. Last October a U.S. airstrike on a hospital in the Afghan city of Kunduz killed 42 patients and staff, despite repeated phone calls appealing for the attack to be called off.

The Obama administration says the drone strikes are necessary to protect U.S. national security against terrorist groups like Islamic State. But the majority of those targeted by Islamic State are Muslims in the Middle East and Asia. In late June and early July IS killed hundreds in terrorist attacks in Bangladesh, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Turkey, all countries with majority Muslim populations.

Protest denial of 'Militant' to readers in prison

Continued from front page

involvement in civil rights and liberties cases — is filing a formal request asking that the impoundments be reversed.

A worker behind bars at the Santa Rosa Correctional Institution in Florida alerted the *Militant* at the end of June that "there is a censorship situation going on with your publication." Authorities there have impounded issues 21 and 23. He filed appeals both times.

One rejection notice from the prison falsely alleges that two pages in issue 23 with an article and photo on a sizable peaceful public protest in Puerto Rico demanding U.S. authorities Free Oscar López contained "Hang/gang signs." López has served 35 years in U.S. prisons for his support of independence for Puerto Rico. There are widespread calls for his release, including from Puerto Rico's governor and unions, churches and other organizations on the island and in the U.S.

This attack on the right of inmates to get the *Militant* and of the paper's right to reach its subscribers appears to have originated at another prison, the Northwest Florida Reception Center, where authorities impounded issue 21. The reason given was an article titled, "Prisoners Strike to Protest Abuse and Little or No Pay in Alabama." Reception Center officials claimed the article "depicts, describes or encourages activities which may lead to the use of physical violence or group disruption."

The Alabama protest was entirely without violence. The article described conditions in several prisons in Alabama that denied inmates their dignity, pay for their forced labor and their rights.

The prisoner in Santa Rosa wrote that he believes the papers were impounded "because the system doesn't agree with the views."

"Literature is not what causes disruption," he wrote. "Nowhere do I recall literature causing physical violence."

In past impoundment fights, Florida prison authorities had to admit there were no grounds to impound *Militant* issues that contained coverage of the hunger strike launched by thousands of inmates in California in 2013. To date Florida's wardens have lost every impoundment battle.

Many papers that cover prisoners' rights and other questions of interest to workers behind bars have to fight to defend the rights of prisoners to receive them, including *Prison Legal News*, *San Francisco Bay Guardian* and the *Militant*. Florida authorities have especially targeted the *Militant*.

When the Reception Center impounded issue 21, other state prison authorities were authorized to do the same pending a decision by the statewide prison Literature Review Committee. That's the reason given to the subscriber in Santa Rosa. And that was the reason they said they took issue 23, though Florida officials have not yet informed the *Militant* where and why it was originally impounded, contrary to their own regulations.

Fight prison censorship

Help get out the word. Print out copies of this article and get them around.

Get statements of support for the *Militant*'s appeal from defenders of workers rights and free speech.

Send a check or money order to The Militant, 306 W. 37th St., 13th floor, New York, NY 10018, earmarked "Prisoners Rights Fight."

Arnie Hershkowitz joined SWP on eve of 1979 revolutions

BY STEVE WARSHELL

Arnie Hershkowitz, a 38-year cadre of the Socialist Workers Party, died June 20 in Houston. He was 83 years old and had been ill with cancer. Arnie, and his wife Leona, met the party in the mid-1970s in Houston.

Hershkowitz was born in 1933 into a family of Jewish garment workers in Brooklyn and grew up in nearby Howard Beach and other parts of Queens. He was drafted into the army at the beginning of the Korean War when he was 18 and returned to New York when he was discharged. He worked as a draftsman, making blueprints for the aircraft and oil industries.

The 1974-75 recession caused massive layoffs in industry. Arnie and Leona, who died a couple years ago, moved from New York to Arizona and then to Houston in 1976, part of a mass migration of tens of thousands of workers looking for jobs in the city's massive oil, steel and transportation industries.

In the mid-1970s great changes were underway in politics, and the U.S. working class was entering center stage with struggles in the United Mine Workers union against the mine bosses and for union democracy, as well as in the United Steelworkers union.

The world was a political cauldron in 1975: the Vietnamese Revolution triumphed against U.S. imperialism's brutal war; Cuban internationalist volunteers responded to a request from Angola's newly independent government to help fight off the invasion of apartheid South Africa's armed forces; and there was revolutionary ferment in Portugal and Spain.

Vietnam and fight for Black rights

Hershkowitz explained how he had been active in the fight against the Vietnam War and in the fight for Black rights. He and Leona came in contact with the Socialist Workers Party in the fight for abortion rights.

Arnie made a decision, under the impact of these developments, to join the SWP in 1978, as did Leona. He came to the conclusion that a party had to be built to end the dictatorship of capital, based on the recognition of the worth and capacities of working people. He joined on the eve of big revolutionary developments. Revolutions in Nicaragua and Grenada — countries that along with Cuba were "three giants rising on the doorstep of imperialism," in the words of Fidel Castro. Revolutionary struggles were taking place across southern Africa, and the Iranian Revolution that unfolded in 1979 changed the Middle East.

In 1978 the SWP made a far-reaching decision for its members to carry out a turn to get jobs in industry and practice communist politics in the trade unions — defeating an opposition in the party that said it couldn't be done. It was clear that developments in the working class and world politics called for that.

Hershkowitz cast his lot with that perspective and was part of building a national party fraction in the United Steelworkers when he was hired into Hughes Tool. It was a massive factory complex making equipment for the oil industry. His union local had been at the center of many struggles in the Houston area, including the fight to transform the union into a democratic and class-struggle organization that could lead workers who wanted to stand up and fight. By 1976, during the campaign of Ed Sadlowski for Steelworkers president, campaigners at Hughes Tool had been targeted by the Ku Klux Klan and were shot at and one seriously wounded while passing out literature at the plant gate.

In 1978 when Hershkowitz was hired, the union was fertile ground for discussions with steelworkers about the struggles of the day.

Enthusiastic propagandist for party

Hershkowitz was a cadre of the party. He worked collectively and in a disciplined way toward the party's goal of overthrowing the dictatorship of capital that we still live under today. Hershkowitz threw himself into all the efforts of the SWP to win people to the movement. He was an enthusiastic propagandist using the arsenal of Pathfinder books and the *Militant* in this work.

The author of this article worked with Hershkowitz in Houston for 19 years and was impressed with his ability to talk to workers and the respectful way he dealt with everyone. He would talk to people with his relaxed manner and his genuine smile. Combined with his understanding of politics Hershkowitz frequently took discussions a long way. He was interested in what workers thought, in their experiences.





Above, AP Photo/Aristotle Saris

Arnie Hershkowitz in 1980s, inset, joined Socialist Workers Party in 1978 on eve of big revolutionary developments. Iranian Revolution, above, that unfolded in 1979 changed Middle East. Also that year revolutions occurred in Nicaragua and Grenada, countries that along with Cuba were "three giants rising on the doorstep of imperialism," in the words of Fidel Castro. Revolutionary struggles were taking place across southern Africa.

Cindy Jaquith worked with him in the branch from 2011 to 2015. "Arnie looked forward to forums and the committee meetings that prepared them as an opportunity for political discussion," she said. "Every week he greeted people, took donations at the door and filed a report on the meeting's outcome.

"Whatever the assignment, Arnie gave it his best shot. The question for him was always how to do it, not could it be done," she said.

Today the SWP is responding to new developments in the class struggle and politics. Party members are building on the indispensable continuity that Hershkowitz and his party went back to and brought forward.

Contributions to continue this work can be sent to the Socialist Workers Party, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

Steve Warshell was the organizer of the SWP in Houston from 2008 to 2015.

NY forum: UK protest vote against EU changed nothing

BY MARK THOMPSON

NEW YORK — "This was a protest vote, that will change nothing in the short run," said Norton Sandler, speaking at a Militant Labor Forum here July 1 about the referendum in the United Kingdom that saw a vote to quit the European Union. Sandler, the organizer of the New York Socialist Workers Party, explained that the party's campaign to sell the new book *Are They Rich Because They're Smart? Class, Privilege, and Learning Under Capitalism* is central to responding to the openings for discussion and debate in the working class.

The ruling class in the U.K. waged "a great fear campaign" leading up to the June 23 referendum, urging a vote to stay in the European Union. Despite that, a majority, including among working people, voted to leave. The result took the rulers in the U.K. and beyond by surprise, "but that doesn't mean that the working class won a victory," Sandler said. "It wasn't a step toward workers strengthening our organizations and acting in our class interests."

In fact the outcome of the vote can "reinforce illusions in British finance capital — the idea that there is a 'we,' workers and bosses together with common national interests."

The prospect that the U.K. may leave the EU does further "puncture the illusion that there is a united Europe on the road to becoming a stable, capitalist superpower." The EU is "28 capitalist nation states that compete with each other," Sandler said. And the strongest ruling class, in Germany, "uses this arrangement to dominate the weaker capitalist countries, such as Greece, and extract wealth from the hides of workers in them."

The idea of a "common European state power and currency that could compete with the U.S. was always a fantasy," he said. From the beginning the EU was stamped by conflict. And the impact of world events on Europe has accelerated its coming apart.

When "the Soviet Union disintegrated in 1991, Washington and its closest imperialist allies, including London, thought they had won the Cold War." They "thought they could use military might to impose their will in the Middle East." They thought they could plunder Russia and Eastern Europe with a free hand through "shock therapy." The consequence has been ongoing wars, financial crises and instability, including a massive influx of refugees and migrants across Europe.

"A lot of ink has been spent in news columns analyzing the U.K. vote," Sandler said, but it is "the world — from South Asia, through the Middle East, to the Balkans and Ukraine — that is shaping politics in the U.K. and Europe."

There were many questions and comments from among the nearly 50 participants. "Why didn't Greece leave the EU?" asked one, referring to the extreme measures imposed on Athens by Berlin last year in exchange for loans to prevent a financial collapse. "The Greek ruling class was too terrified to leave," replied Sandler, "but whether in or out, workers still go to the wall." There have been mass working-class protests in Greece, "but there was no communist leadership. That's the challenge everywhere." The United Kingdom is becoming less united, Sandler noted in response to another question. "Scotland's capitalist leaders say they want to leave the U.K. But that's not so simple either. They share nuclear military bases, offshore oilfields and financial institutions."

"Was it correct to take sides on the referendum?" was another question. "Communists oppose the political, military and trade pacts of the rulers, because we oppose their class rule," Sandler said. "But that doesn't mean we campaign around them. We campaign to advance the struggles of working people against their state power and system of exploitation."

In face of capitalism's depression conditions and wars, Sandler said the challenge for the working class is how we organize to replace the dictatorship of capital. "That's what the Socialist Workers Party and the Communist Leagues are campaigning to discuss with working people."

Sandler began and ended the forum inviting participants to join in getting *Are They Rich Because They're Smart?* broadly into the working class.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

NEW YORK

New York

On the Eve of the Democratic and Republican Conventions: Accelerating Crisis in Bourgeois Politics and the Socialist Workers Party's Response. Fri., July 15. Dinner, 6:45 p.m.; program 7:30 p.m. *227 W. 29th St., 6th floor. Tel.: (646) 964-4793.*

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

Maggie Trowe, Editor

Help the *Militant* cover labor struggles around the world!

This column gives a voice to those engaged in battle and building solidarity today — including unionists striking US Foods, workers locked out by Honeywell, construction workers demanding safe conditions and workers fighting for $15 an hour and a union. I invite those involved in workers' battles to contact me at 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018; or (212) 244-4899; or themilitant@mac.com. We'll work together to ensure your story is told.

— Maggie Trowe



Militant/Deborah Liatos

Nurses rally June 26 in front of Kaiser Hospital in Los Angeles during four-day strike of 1,300 members of California Nurses Association against short-staffing and for safer patient care.

Wash. Machinists at Triumph approve contract, end strike

SPOKANE, Wash. — Workers at Triumph Composite Systems here returned to work June 27 after voting by an 82 percent margin to approve a four-year contract, ending a strike that began May 10.

Key points of contention were the two-tier wage structure, health care costs and the lack of pensions for newer workers. According to officials of International Association of Machinists District 751, the company backed off on some of its demands. A wage gap of 12.5 percent between the two tiers will be cut in half over the next three years. The contract also caps increases to health care costs for the next four years.

"The contract wasn't everything we wanted, but stingy as the company is, we were able to close the gap partly between tier-one and tier-two pay and improve the pension plans for both tiers," Bob Porter, who inspects floor panels, told the *Militant*. "This is something we can fight further on in the future."

Triumph at first said it planned to keep 50 of the replacement workers it had bused in during the strike for a month longer and have them enter the plant by a separate door. Porter said the unionists told bosses, "No Way! It's either take all of us back and send the scabs out or you can keep them without us!" The company backed off and sent the scabs home, he reported.

— Mary Martin

St. Paul nurses: 'Bosses never take human factor into account'

ST. PAUL, Minn. — Members of the Minnesota Nurses Association returned to work June 26 after a seven-day strike by 4,800 nurses against five hospitals owned by Allina Health in Minneapolis and St. Paul.

One demand in the contract offer that the nurses rejected is to switch health insurance from the union plan to Allina's inferior plan, which includes higher deductibles, to save the company $10 million a year.

"Allina wants to use a computer system to determine staffing numbers to increase productivity," Bunny Engeldorf, a chief steward at United Hospital, said on the picket line. "They never take into account the human factor."

Tracy Mitchum, one of 1,400 nurses hired to scab on the strike, walked out of Mercy Hospital in Coon Rapids and joined the picket line. She told the *Star Tribune* that "she was dismayed Tuesday night when a child recovering from an appendectomy languished in the post-anesthesia care unit for hours. Another nurse also provided inadequate attention to a man with declining oxygen saturation levels, she said." Allina denied the allegations.

"It's not just that they want to take away our health insurance or just about saving that money," said Kasey Herrera, an operating room nurse at Abbott. "They are out to break the union."

— Kevin Dwire

LA Kaiser nurses hold 4-day strike over staffing, contract

LOS ANGELES — Some 1,300 nurses at Kaiser Hospital began a four-day strike June 23 against short-staffing and for safer patient care. The members of the California Nurses Association/National Nurses United are pressing their fight for a contract.

Joel Briones, a nurse who has worked at Kaiser Hospital for six years, led chants at a June 26 rally.

"Patients admitted to the wrong department," Briones chanted. "Profits before patients. Patients discharged too early. Lack of working equipment. Use of travel nurses. We stand for our patients."

"Many days we are so short-staffed that many of us are not able to take our breaks," Kaiser pediatric nurse Sandra Hanke said in a union press release.

— Deborah Liatos

Steelworkers at ArcelorMittal ratify contract

BY BETSY FARLEY

EAST CHICAGO, Ind. — The United Steelworkers union announced June 23 the ratification of a three-year contract with ArcelorMittal, the world's largest steelmaker.

The contract, which covers 14,000 workers in the United States, freezes wages, increases health insurance costs for retirees and eliminates health insurance for newly hired workers when they retire. It was approved with 72.9 percent voting in favor.

"It's not a contract we can brag about, but considering what the company wanted in the beginning, including a $5-an-hour cut in wages and incentives, it's good," Jack Tipold, Steelworkers Local 6787 recording secretary, told the *Post Tribune*.

The company initially demanded drastic cuts in health care for retired workers and steep increases for active workers.

ArcelorMittal claimed losses of $416 million in the first quarter of 2016, but confirmed that it expected core profits for the year to exceed $4.5 billion.

"If this company was losing money the way management tells us, then what would be the point of keeping it open?" Marvin Morris, a worker in the East Chicago Cold Strip mill, said to the *Militant*. "Don't tell me this guy [CEO Lakshmi Mittal] would keep the plant open if he's going broke."

The Steelworkers organized several large protests after the contract expired in September 2015. ArcelorMittal workers joined together with unionists at U.S. Steel, Allegheny Technologies Inc., and Cliffs Natural Resources, whose contracts expired around the same time. But as negotiations stretched on for eight months the mobilizations fell off.

"The extended time between the expired agreement and the new one was one reason so many voted to approve," USW Local 1165 President Vonie Long told the *Militant*. Long, who works at the ArcelorMittal mill in Coatesville, Pennsylvania, joined picket lines at steel company ATI in Pennsylvania, where workers were locked out for seven months.

"I think it's terrible we're not getting a wage increase for three years," said Patrick Duffy, a roll builder at Indiana Harbor's East Chicago mill. "The cost of living goes up, so we're making less, you can buy less."

"This is a dangerous job. Another co-worker on my job got his finger cut off," Duffy said. "But Mittal is just interested in making money, that's all he cares about."

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO

THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

July 19, 1991

Civil war has broken out in Yugoslavia. Undeterred by warnings from the U.S. government and its European allies, the Slovenian people beat back attacks by the Yugoslav Army.

The opening of civil war in Yugoslavia sent shock waves through the governments of Western Europe and highlighted the deepening imperialist rivalries between Washington, Paris and London on one side, and Germany and Austria on the other.

Croatia, Slovenia and other republics and regions of Yugoslavia have for many years suffered national oppression at the hands of the privileged Stalinist bureaucracy that rules the country and is made up primarily of Serbs. Many working people have thrown their support behind the national struggles in the hope that they will rid themselves of the principal force, which has been directly oppressing them for so long.

THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED WEEKLY IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

July 25, 1966

HAYNEVILLE, Ala. — The black people of Lowndes County have taken seriously the idea of black power and are organizing a political party independent of the Democrats and Republicans. This party, the Lowndes County Freedom Organization (also known as the Black Panther party because of its ballot symbol), is running its candidates in the next election.

Before my visit to Lowndes County, I had heard the story of the Lowndes County Freedom Organization and knew about the ideas of the leadership. What my trip showed me was that the people of Lowndes County not only have good ideas, but know how to put them into practice. A lot can be learned by watching the leaders of the Lowndes County Freedom Organization as they go about their work. They are real mass leaders who are organizing the black people there to rely on themselves.

THE MILITANT

Official Weekly Organ of the Socialist Workers Party

July 12, 1941

The United Mine Workers (CIO) scored a major victory over the Southern Appalachian soft coal operators when the latter signed a contract last Sunday in the face of an impending strike of 150,000 Southern miners.

The new contract, providing a $7 a day wage, eliminates the 40 cent wage differential between Northern and Southern miners, the issue over which the Southern operators bolted negotiations last March and precipitated the 28-day strike of 400,000 Northern and Southern miners in April.

Included in the two-year contract was a clause granting vacations with pay for the first time in the history of Southern mines, and the extension of the union shop into the mines of the "Bloody" Harlan County Kentucky Coal Operators Association, sole operators to refuse to sign the union shop agreement in 1939.

Workers still battered by Clinton 1996 welfare cuts

BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

Twenty years ago President William Clinton carried out his brutal pledge to "end welfare as we know it." The new law was aimed especially at single working-class women. Despite Clinton's claim that the law would "help them make the move from welfare to work," its consequence has been deeper poverty, insecurity and social crisis for millions of working-class women and children.

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 was taken lock, stock and barrel —even its name — from the so-called Contract with America promoted by Republican Congressman Newt Gingrich. It was just one of several laws passed in 1996 that are part of the Clinton anti-labor legacy. For the U.S. capitalist rulers it is their biggest success so far in eroding the Social Security system.

The legislation abolished Aid to Families With Dependent Children, set up to "safeguard against misfortunes" as a key part of the 1935 Social Security Act, won as a by-product of workers' struggles at the time and extended under the pressure of the civil rights movement and mass Black protests of the 1960s.

It was replaced with the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, which set a lifetime limit of five years for receiving cash assistance; states could set an even lower limit. It required that the majority of adults getting assistance work at least 30 hours a week with or without pay.

Unlike Aid to Families with Dependent Children — where the federal government allocated more money if the number of people needing aid went up — under the new law, states were given a fixed block grant. Instead of giving all the money as cash aid, states were allowed to use an increasing percentage for programs to prevent "out-of-wedlock pregnancies" and encourage the formation of "two-parent families."

The law led to slashing welfare rolls from 4.7 million families receiving cash assistance in 1996, to 1.7 million in 2014. This was the first time an entire category of working people — single mothers and their children — were removed from the kinds of protections guaranteed since the 1935 act was passed.

In 2008 then presidential candidate Barack Obama told a forum that at first he opposed the bill, but became "absolutely convinced" that "welfare reform" has to remain a "centerpiece of any social policy."

Hillary Clinton had no hesitations. "Now that we've said these people are no longer deadbeats — they're actually out there being productive — how do we keep them there?" she said in 2002.

In a May 28 editorial this year, the *Washington Post* claims that the Clintons' reform "has been broadly vindicated and enjoys wide bipartisan support" and that it has led to an increase in female employment. The *Post* admitted that "the national poverty rate has crept back up to the pre-reform level and much of the growth has occurred among the poorest of the poor."

The *Post* doesn't mention that this employment was mostly low-paying, nonunion jobs, or that any increase in single women working was due to an uptick in hiring in the economy.





Above, 2013 jobs fair for welfare recipients in San Jose, California. Clinton's 1996 slash in welfare was especially aimed at single women workers. Inset, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics graph shows women's labor participation has declined to 56.8 percent, well below level before Clinton's "reform."

That uptick did not last long. Women's labor participation rate reached 60 percent in 1999, up from 59.1 percent in 1996, but by 2010 it was below the 1996 level and has since declined to 56.8 percent today.

Only 26 percent of families below the official U.S. poverty level are receiving cash assistance today, down from 68 percent in 1996.

Some state governments were not content with the five-year limit on benefits. Kansas Gov. Sam Brownback shortened that state's limit to 24 months in May. In 2015 Arizona became the first state to impose a 12-month lifetime limit. Arizona's maximum monthly benefit is $278 for a family of three. That's living large compared to Mississippi's monthly benefit of $170.

The lump sum block grant assigned to states under the Clinton law is unchanged at $16.5 billion since 1996, although "inflation has shrunk the value of the money about a third," according to the *New York Times.*

Under the impact of the deepening capitalist economic crisis, those receiving cash assistance declined, while the numbers of people receiving food stamps has increased. In 2000 some 17.2 million people received food stamps. By April this year it was about 45 million. The maximum for a single person is $194 a month, but in most states it's for only three months in any three-year period, unless you're working, going to school or training.

In June, Paul LePage, governor of Maine, following in the footsteps of Clinton, threatened to end food stamp benefits there. Recipients are wasting public money on "a steady diet of Mars bars and Mountain Dew," he said. "It's time for the federal government to wake up and smell the energy drinks."

Excerpt from 'Are They Rich Because They're Smart?'

The enlightened meritocracy

Below is an excerpt from the chapter "Growing class stratification and the 'enlightened meritocracy'" in the new book Are They Rich Because They're Smart: Class, Privilege and Learning Under Capitalism. *Copyright © 2016 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.*

BY JACK BARNES

The hypocritical and fraudulent character of Obama's 2008 Fathers' Day lecture about "the foundations of our families" getting "weaker" became even clearer a few weeks later, when he took part in a televised presidential forum in southern California at the Saddleback Church of Rev. Rick Warren. When Warren asked him about "the most significant position you held ten years ago that you no longer hold today," Obama immediately pointed to his support for the abolition of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) by the Clinton administration and Congress in 1996. Obama said that he "was much more concerned ten years ago when President Clinton initially signed the bill that this could have disastrous results."

But by August 2008 — a few months before the November presidential election, and a few weeks before the explosion of the world financial crisis and its unfolding consequences for workers' jobs and conditions — Obama was "absolutely convinced" that Clinton's "welfare reform" had to remain "a centerpiece of any social policy."

Quite a contrast to the scathing indictment a decade earlier by Daniel Patrick Moynihan, then the Democratic Party US Senator from New York. Speaking on the Senate floor in 1996, he called the law "the first step in dismantling the social contract that has been in place since at least the 1930s." (The "social contract" — that's how a bourgeois-academic-turned-politician talks about concessions wrested as by-products of the mass working-class struggles that forged the industrial unions.) In a 1996 letter to President Clinton, Moynihan went even further, labeling it "the most brutal act of social policy since Reconstruction" — he should have said since the bloody defeat of Reconstruction.

What have been the results since 1996 of what Obama called this liberal "centerpiece"? A 2015 report by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities summarized the brutal consequences, an outcome magnified by the sharp contraction in the rate of growth of capitalist production and trade — the slow-burning depression, in fact — that opened in 2008.

Far from guaranteeing women productive jobs at good wages, those pushed off AFDC who've been lucky enough to find work of any kind have been forced into low-paying, nonunion jobs with little or no health, pension, or other benefits. By 2013 the percentage of single working-class mothers with jobs stood at 63 percent — exactly where it had been in 1996. That means 37 percent have no jobs, even jobs with miserable pay, conditions, and protections.

Cuban 5 'Freedom Tour' in United Kingdom

Hear René González and Gerardo Hernández, Cuban revolutionaries who were framed-up and jailed in U.S. for 16 years.

Durham: Sat., July 9, 1 p.m. Miners Gala, Racecourse

Glasgow: July 13, 7 p.m. STUC, 333 Woodlands Road

Manchester: July 14, 6:30 p.m. Town Hall, Albert Square

Cardiff: July 15, 12 p.m. City Hall, Gorsedd Gardens Rd.

London: July 15, 6:30 p.m. Hamilton House, Mabledon Pl.

Dorset: July 17, 2 p.m. Dorset

Organized by Cuba Solidarity Campaign. For info: www.cuba-solidarity.org.uk

United Mine Workers Rally at the U.S. Capitol

The UMWA is calling a national rally to pressure Congress to pass the Miners' Protection Act to prevent the cutting off of health-care and pension benefits for 22,000 retired union members, spouses and dependents.

Thur., Sept. 8, 11 a.m.
Washington, D.C.

For more info visit: www.umwa.org

SWP wins victory, is on ballot in Washington

BY EDWIN FRUIT

OLYMPIA, Wash. — In a victory for the right of working people to have their own voice independent of the capitalist parties, the state of Washington certified Alyson Kennedy and Osborne Hart, Socialist Workers Party candidates for U.S. president and vice president, for the November ballot. Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor Mary Martin and Hart announced the victory at a July 5 press conference on the Capitol steps here.

Even though 1,715 people had signed petitions — mostly at their doorsteps — for the right of the SWP to be on the ballot, at first the secretary of state's office had said that not enough of these were valid to meet the 1,000-signature requirement. "In effect, they were striking some 800 people who had signed to support our right to be on the ballot," Martin said.

"We contacted unionists like Longshore workers in Longview and Machinists in Spokane as well as those who had been part of the fight for $15 and a union to write protest letters," Martin added. People the party had stood side by side with on picket lines in fights to defend the union, like workers on strike against Triumph Composites and teachers who held a walkout at Green River college in Auburn, as well as those met more recently while campaigning door to door across the state.



Militant/Paul Mailhot

Spokane reporter interviews SWP candidates Osborne Hart and Mary Martin July 5 in Olympia. State officials at first claimed party was short of signatures but then certified it for ballot.

Several days later the secretary of state's office said they had rechecked the signatures and that the party had more than a sufficient number of valid signatures.

State elections office spokesperson Sheryl Moss told Spokane's daily *Spokesman-Review* that the signatures were checked at first against an old database but claimed they had never said the party would not be on the ballot. It was just a "heads up." After the database was updated they found the party met all the requirements.

"Coming from my recent experiences on the Machinists union strike at Triumph Composites, I believe labor should always stand up on the question of the haves and have nots. Unless you have a voice, you will take a back seat. If you use your voice the outcome will be positive," wrote Bob Porter, a member of IAM Local 86 in Spokane, in a message read at the press conference. "Congratulations to the Socialist Workers Party! I'm proud of the extra mile you guys go for workers not only here but all over the world."

The most important question facing working people, Hart said, is that in the fight for solidarity with others and struggles against all forms of oppression and exploitation we will change ourselves and open the road to overturn the rule of capital we live under.

At the news conference, Joe O'Sullivan of the *Seattle Times* asked, "Do you see [Bernie] Sanders' support being channeled in your direction?"

"The Democrats and Republicans both support capitalism," Hart replied. "The Socialist Workers Party is for ending not reforming this system of oppression. Sanders is channeling people into the Democratic Party and does not advance any perspective for workers taking power."

100s get books, meet Socialist Workers Party

Continued from front page

introduce thousands of workers to the Socialist Workers Party. The new book, by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes, is a great way to present the party's revolutionary perspective. In face of the slow-burning depression and spreading wars caused by the world crisis of capitalism, it explains, the working class is capable of using its intelligence and capacities to begin to transform ourselves and others on the road to workers power.

The centerpiece of this campaigning is going door to door in working-class areas in cities, small towns and farming areas across the country. Since June 25 teams campaigning in Utah have sold 76 copies of the book; in Vermont, 133 copies; and in Washington state, 16.

In these discussions many people bear witness to the toll of the grinding social and economic crisis of capitalism. Accounts of difficulties in getting adequate health care for illnesses and work injuries abound.

"I work for FedEx from 4 a.m. to 9 a.m. and for myself after that" doing mowing and other work, Michael Wilcox, who lives in a trailer park in Bolton, said July 1. "I am not covered for health insurance, so that comes out of my pay."

Two days earlier, Sharon Holcomb in South Burlington described the "donut" gap she and her husband face — the shortfall between Medicare coverage and their medical expenses.

Both Wilcox and Holcomb bought a copy of *Are They Rich Because They're Smart?* They took advantage of the special offer to get the book and a 12-week subscription to the *Militant* for just $10.

Many others have also been eager to discuss and start reading the book, noting the words on the back cover, "In the coming battles forced upon us by the capitalist rulers, workers will begin to transform ourselves and our attitudes toward life, work and each other," thereby discovering "our own worth and … what we're capable of becoming."

Other social problems often mentioned on Vermont porches include inadequate wages, the debt burden from student loans and the epidemic of addiction to opiates.

In Rutland an announcement by the mayor in April that 100 refugees from the civil war in Syria would be resettled in the city of 16,500 has sparked controversy. The proposal, which is yet to be approved by the State Department, is part of a broader resettlement plan being discussed across the state.

In a July 3 discussion in a trailer park in Milton, George Ladabouche, who works as a carpenter, differed with the attitude of a friend who said the Syrian refugees would be taking the jobs of American workers. "They have to live too," Ladabouche said, adding that immigrants are often left with no choice but to "work for minimum wage."

"It's true that the capitalists try to use immigrants to divide the working class and push down wages," Sergio Zambrana, one of those going door to door, told him. "Workers need to counter that by bringing them into the unions and fighting any discrimination they face." Ladabouche's response was to buy the book and subscription.

Several of those met door to door have volunteered to campaign. "The line that caught my eye from your paper is that this is 'the crisis of capitalism,'" Thomas Locatel, 58, a carpenter who is now disabled, told Chris Hoeppner in Winooski July 4. "I never thought of it like that," he said as he bought *Are They Rich Because They're Smart?* and a *Militant* subscription.

"When I described how open people are to the Socialist Workers Party and to our explanation of the course of building a movement to take power out of the capitalists' hands," Hoeppner said, "Locatel asked if he could go with us door to door. I said, 'Yes, of course.' He said he would start reading the book right away."

As of July 4, the results of the campaign in Vermont — beside the books — stand at 92 subscriptions and 186 copies of the *Militant*, and 1,190 signatures on the petition to place SWP candidates Alyson Kennedy for U.S. president and Osborne Hart for vice president on the ballot in the state.

Osborne Hart to join Baton Rouge protests!

SWP candidate for vice president Osborne Hart and campaign supporters are on their way to Baton Rouge, Louisiana, to join protests against July 5 cop killing of Alton Sterling and expand getting 'Are They Rich Because They're Smart?' into the hands of more workers. For campaign literature visit www.themilitant.com. Contact party branches listed on page 8 to join in.

Send contributions to Socialist Workers Party National Campaign, 227 W. 29th St., 6th Fl., New York NY 10001. Tel.: (646) 922-8186. Email: swp2016campaign@gmail.com

Minnesota SWP: 'Headquarters break-in won't stop our efforts'

BY KEVIN DWIRE

MINNEAPOLIS — The statewide campaign headquarters of the Socialist Workers Party in Minnesota was broken into over the June 25-26 weekend. The break-in took place less than two weeks after the SWP's ticket of Alyson Kennedy for president and Osborne Hart for vice president was certified for ballot status in the state.

"No break-in will prevent the Socialist Workers Party and supporters of our campaign from continuing to take our message to working-class communities across the state," said David Rosenfeld, the SWP candidate for U.S. Congress in the 5th District.

Campaigners have already gone door to door in over 40 communities around the state, introducing working people to the party while collecting signatures to place Kennedy and Hart on the ballot, and that will not stop.

‘Cubans know what we are capable of, thanks to Angola’

Cuba and Angola, Fighting for Africa’s Freedom and Our Own, a Book of the Month for July, tells the story of some 425,000 Cubans who volunteered between 1975 and 1991 to help defend newly independent Angola against multiple invasions by South Africa’s racist apartheid regime, backed by Washington. This excerpt is from Raúl Castro’s May 27, 1991, speech in Havana, to the final contingent of internationalist volunteers returning from their successful mission in Angola — fighting side by side with Angolans and Namibians to secure Angolan sovereignty. Copyright © 2013 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY RAÚL CASTRO

The Cuban presence in Angola was the continuation of the best traditions of our nation. If there was anything unusual about it, it was the people’s massive participation, which had never before reached such levels; which unleashed the will of an entire people to take part in the epic struggle. Even more far-reaching and significant was the absolutely voluntary nature of their participation. Ours was not just a professional army, even if we take great pride in our troops’ performance in combat and technical training. It was an army of the masses, a revolutionary army of the people.



Ricardo López/Granma

The most “far-reaching and significant” aspect of the Cuban internationalists who went to Angola, Raúl Castro said “was the absolutely voluntary nature of their participation.” Above, Cuban teacher Juana Martínez Rodríguez in Angola, 1988.

The more than four hundred thousand Cuban men and women who passed through Angola over all these years and whose names will be honored by those who come after us, came from all the generations that are active today in the Cuban process — from Rebel Army veterans to the youngest recruits and reserve members.

All were motivated by a single interest — to come to the aid of and help consolidate our sister republic of Angola. …

In Cuba, we gave this internationalist mission the name “Carlota” in homage to an exceptional African woman who, on Cuban soil, headed two rebellions against colonial oppression and who — just as they wanted to do to Angola in 1975 — was dismembered by the butchers who succeeded in capturing her during the second uprising [1843]. Without even knowing it, the thousands of Cubans who formed part of Operation Carlota were to spread the legend of the Cuban African heroine in Cabinda, Quifangondo, the Medunda hills, Cangamba, Sumbe, Ruacaná, Calueque, and Cuito Cuanavale.

Because of that unforgettable experience, our tank crews, infantrymen, artillerymen, combat engineers, sappers, pilots, special troops, scouts, communications troops, rear guard service personnel, antiaircraft defense troops, truck drivers, engineers, technicians, political workers, military counterintelligence, and combatants in other specialized roles in the Revolutionary Armed Forces and Ministry of the Interior — these compañeros will give the best of themselves. They’ll become better patriots, better revolutionaries, and more committed party members. They — along with the outstanding and exemplary workers of Cubana Airlines and the merchant marine — were the ones who made the operation a success.

They served shoulder to shoulder with the Angolan people, together with teachers, doctors, construction workers and other civilian specialists from our country, through the longest, cruelest, and most devastating conflict that Africa has ever known. They were to be exceptional witnesses to the fact that no other people of black Africa has paid so dearly as Angola for the struggle to preserve its territorial integrity and its very existence as a state.

In the course of this extraordinary test, a decisive role was played by the commanders and officers who bore the brunt of countless decisions. They were called upon, above all, to set an example and indeed did so to the hilt, as evidenced by the fact that one out of every four of our men killed in action was an officer. …

Compañeras and compañeros: In memory of our fallen comrades, we are gathered here to give an account to our people, to the leadership of the party and the government, of the mission assigned to the Revolutionary Armed Forces almost sixteen years ago.

When we face new and unexpected challenges we will always be able to recall the epic of Angola with gratitude, because without Angola we would not be as strong as we are today.

If our people know themselves better, if all of us know much better what we are capable of achieving — veterans as well as our young people, the new generations — that, too, is thanks to Angola!

The prestige, the authority, the respect enjoyed by Cuba today in the world are inseparable from what we accomplished in Angola.

Thanks to Angola, we understand in all its dimensions Comrade Fidel’s point that when a people like the Cuban people has been capable of fighting and making sacrifices for the freedom of another people, what wouldn’t it be capable of doing for itself!

If today we are more mature in our reflections and decisions, if today we are more staunch, more experienced, that too is thanks to Angola!

If today we are more aware of the work of the revolution, because we have experienced the disastrous remnants of neocolonialism and underdevelopment, for that we must thank Angola!

If today our political and ideological development, our revolutionary, socialist and internationalist consciousness are deeper, we owe that to Angola, too!

If today our combat experience has been enriched, if we’re better trained and more ready to defend our nation, it is because together with hundreds of thousands of soldiers, 56,622 officers went through the school of life and struggle in Angola.

If our people are now prepared to confront any difficulty in the times ahead, if they’re confident about themselves and their ability to resist, to continue developing the country, and to succeed, that confidence reflects our experience of how we grew in the face of adversity and won in Angola!

And if there’s a people to whom we owe a lesson of stoicism, of greatness, of the spirit of sacrifice and of loyalty, it is the Angolan people, who said goodbye to our internationalist fighters in an exemplary manner, with love and gratitude.

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FLORIDA: Miami: 7911 Biscayne Blvd., Suite 2. Zip: 33138. Tel: (305) 390-8310. Email: swpmiami@att.net

GEORGIA: Atlanta: 777 Cleveland Ave. SW Suite 103. Zip: 30315. Tel: (678) 528-7828. Email: swpatlanta@bellsouth.net

ILLINOIS: Chicago: 2018 S. Ashland Ave. Zip: 60608. Tel: (312) 455-0111. Email: SWPChicago@fastmail.fm

MINNESOTA: Minneapolis: 416 E. Hennepin Ave., Suite 214. Zip: 55414. Tel: (612) 729-1205. Email: tcswp@qwestoffice.net

NEBRASKA: Lincoln: Tel: (402) 217-4906. Email: swplincoln@windstream.net.

NEW YORK: New York: 227 W. 29th St., 6th Floor. Zip: 10001. Tel: (646) 964-4793. Email: newyorkswp@gmail.com

PENNSYLVANIA: Philadelphia: 2824 Cottman Ave., Suite 20. Zip: 19149. Tel: (215) 708-1270. Email: philaswp@verizon.net

WASHINGTON, D.C.: 7603 Georgia Ave. NW, Suite 300. Zip: 20011. Tel: (202) 536-5080. Email: swp.washingtondc@verizon.net

WASHINGTON: Seattle: 5418 Rainier Ave. South. Zip: 98118-2439. Tel: (206) 323-1755. Email: seattleswp@qwestoffice.net

AUSTRALIA

Sydney: 1st Flr, 3/281-287 Beamish St., Campsie, NSW 2194. Mailing address: P.O. Box 164, Campsie, NSW 2194. Tel: (02) 9718 9698. Email: cl_australia@optusnet.com.au

CANADA

QUEBEC: Montreal: 7107 St. Denis #204 H2S 2S5. Tel: (514) 272-5840. Email: cllc_can@bellnet.ca **ALBERTA: Calgary:** Dragon City Mall, 328 Centre St. SE, Suite 246. T2G 4X6 Tel: (403) 457-9044. Email: cllccalgary@fastmail.fm

FRANCE

Paris: BP 10130, 75723 Paris Cedex 15. Email: militant.paris@gmail.com

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland: 188a Onehunga Mall, Onehunga. Postal address: P.O. Box 3025, Auckland 1140. Tel: (09) 636-3231. Email: clauck@xtra.co.nz

UNITED KINGDOM

ENGLAND: London: 2nd Floor, 83 Kingsland High St., Dalston. Postal code: E8 2PB. Tel: (020) 3583-3553. Email: cllondon@fastmail.fm **Manchester:** Room 301, 3rd floor, Hilton House, 26–28 Hilton St. Postal code: M1 2EH. Tel: (016) 1478-2496. Email: clmanchr@gmail.com

EDITORIAL

No deportations! Legalize immigrants!

Competition among workers for jobs is a condition of life under capitalism. Anything that increases competition among us, works to the advantage of the bosses who seek to drive down wages and bolster their profits at our expense.

That's why the capitalist class scapegoats immigrant workers. If they get us to believe that workers without papers are "stealing our jobs" they can undermine the only actions that can counteract competition: Unionizing and organizing the unorganized.

Demanding an end to deportations and calling for immediately legalizing immigrants without papers so they can work and travel without fear are essential to building strong, fighting unions.

That's why working people need to reject the reactionary rhetoric against Mexicans and Muslims by Donald Trump. Trump talks up a storm — from threatening to build a wall to denying entry to Muslims. Meanwhile President Barack Obama and his predecessors Bill Clinton and George W. Bush have already built a wall along much of the Mexican border — though they try to pretty it up by calling it a fence. And under Democrats and Republicans alike the U.S. government has beefed up the number of cops on the border and other harsh measures to better regulate the flow of labor to their advantage.

When millions of immigrant workers chanted, "We are workers, not criminals," during nationwide demonstrations and a May Day strike in 2006 they won the respect of fellow workers, including U.S.-born, from coast to coast.

They demonstrated the capacity of the working class to act in our interests independently of the capitalist parties. It's only by relying on our own strength — not on executive orders that strengthen the power of the president or on the promises of bourgeois politicians — that we can win over our fellow workers to a common struggle.

The Socialist Workers Party in the U.S., and the Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom, are building parties that fight for this course. Join us!

'Workers can organize all of society'

Continued from front page

zalo Salazar, a leader of the Co-Op strike, told Kennedy. They met in Huntington, a mining town of 2,000 south of here July 4 and discussed what was gained by this labor battle that won broad solidarity and set an example for struggle.

Salazar now works in a nearby mine. There are only seven active coal mines in Utah today, down from 14 in 2003. Last year PacifiCorp Energy closed Deer Creek, the last union-organized mine in the state. PacifiCorp President and CEO Micheal Dunn blamed "rapidly escalating pension liabilities for the mine's represented workforce" in a press release announcing the closure.

"When coal mines close, it affects people in towns across the area," said Kurtis Henderson as he thumbed through *Are They Rich Because They're Smart? Class, Privilege and Learning Under Capitalism.* He and his wife Shella invited Kennedy to talk in their living room in Huntington. Henderson, 38, has been a coal miner since he graduated from high school.

"The Socialist Workers Party says working people need to demand a massive federal jobs program to put millions to work at union scale across the country building up the infrastructure," Kennedy replied.

"Come back next week and we'll buy that book," Shella Henderson said.

Tatia Drage works at an agency that provides assistance to people who can't pay their heating bills. "It hurts me when someone has to freeze all winter because they earn $100 more than the maximum annual income to qualify for home heating aid," she said.

"My party thinks working people can organize a powerful movement to displace the dictatorship of capital and organize society on values of human solidarity and dignity," Kennedy told Drage. "The rulers say they're rich because they're smart, but the truth is they're rich because they exploit us. The working class produces all the wealth, and we can become confident and strong enough to run all of society." Drage got a copy of *Are They Rich Because They're Smart?*

Ranchers push back state harassment

Socialist Workers Party campaigners spent July 2 in Morgan, a small town east of Ogden where ranchers in the Pentz family have had a dispute with the Utah Department of Transportation. "Our family has been running cattle and sheep for 50 years," Tammy Pentz told the *Militant* when campaigners knocked on her door. Getting the 90 cattle to summer pastures means herding them along the Interstate for eight miles. But this year, Pentz said, authorities put up barricades to block the cattle.

After a 90-minute standoff June 30, the state relented and the Pentzes mounted their horses and all-terrain vehicles to move the cattle.

Going door to door in Morgan, Socialist Workers Party members found many people had been encouraged that the state was pushed back. "Everyone supports our efforts," Pentz said. After a discussion she bought *Are They Rich Because They're Smart?* and a subscription to the *Militant* and signed to get the SWP candidates on the ballot in Utah.

SWP campaigners in Utah have sold 76 copies of *Are They Rich Because They're Smart?* and more than 72 *Militant* subscriptions and 144 single copies. They have collected 675 signatures to put the Socialist Workers Party on the ballot. Martin Sunter, 21, a flooring installer, joined door to door campaigning July 3 after meeting with Socialist Workers Party members, renewing his *Militant* subscription and getting a copy of the new book.

Bernie Senter and Anthony Dutrow in Morgan, Utah, contributed to this article.

LETTERS

Passing on the 'Militant'

You folks publish a good informative paper and my Spanish-speaking friends here remind me to pass it on when I'm done reading it. So not only I but *we* would like the subscription to continue.

A prisoner
New York

Do decrees advance struggle?

The *Militant*'s opposition to "presidential decrees" ("Gov't 'Bathroom' Directive Sets Back Fight for Solidarity" in June 6 issue) sounds categorical. But is that the case? After all, Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation of 1862, Roosevelt's order in 1941 to allow Blacks to be hired in defense industries, and Truman's order in 1948 to desegregate the armed forces were all executive orders. And in 1962 civil rights leaders demanded that Kennedy issue a Second Emancipation for full scale desegregation — which would have been another executive order. Isn't it really about which decrees actually advance the class struggle? Please clarify.

August Nimtz
Twin Cities, Minnesota

'Militant' Prisoners' Fund

The Prisoners' Fund makes it possible to send prisoners reduced rate subscriptions. To donate, send a check or money order payable to the Militant and earmarked "Prisoners' Fund" to 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018.

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

The dangers of presidential orders

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

REPLY TO A READER

In a letter printed on this page, August Nimtz questions the *Militant*'s position that the growing use of executive orders poses a threat to working people and democratic rights, even when ostensibly issued to advance progressive causes. "Isn't it really about which decrees actually advance the class struggle?" he asks.

In the introduction to *Are They Rich Because They're Smart?* Socialist Workers Party leader Steve Clark explains, "The expanding concentration of power in the hands of the presidency — including the de facto power to declare wars, and *to bypass legislation and debate* by issuing Executive Orders — is dangerous (ultimately a bonapartist threat) to the interests of workers, working farmers, and the labor movement. [My emphasis]"

Under the U.S. Constitution the president's role is to "preserve, protect and defend" the Constitution, including the Bill of Rights, won as a result of the First American Revolution for protection of workers and working farmers from the state, not to be a new king and concentrate all power into his hands.

The Emancipation Proclamation, issued by President Abraham Lincoln on Jan. 1, 1863, signaled a political and military shift from a defensive war waged by Union forces to a revolutionary war. The proclamation declared slaves within the 11 rebellious states free, but not nationwide. It took adoption of the 13th Amendment nearly three years later to make abolition of slavery the rule of the land.

The executive orders issued by President Franklin Roosevelt June 25, 1941, banning discriminatory practices in the defense industries and by Harry Truman "for equality of treatment and opportunity" in the armed forces seven years later were based on enforcing the law, especially the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. That amendment, ratified in 1868, says that no state will "deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws." They were not the beginning of an experiment in social engineering promoted by "smart" people.

Roosevelt issued his order one week before a mass march on Washington for Black rights was to take place, which union leader A. Philip Randolph and Walter White of the NAACP then abruptly called off.

It was the struggles by Black workers and farmers against racist discrimination and lynch-mob terror leading up to and through World War II that laid the basis for the proletarian-led street protests in the 1950s and '60s that eradicated the Jim Crow segregation system once and for all — not executive orders. Details of this wartime resistance are presented in the Pathfinder book *Fighting Racism in World War II.*

Truman's order was strongly opposed by Gen. Omar Bradley, Army Chief of Staff. It took many more years before the military was fully desegregated, impacted by the rise of the civil rights movement.

On issues like immigration, we're for no deportations, but an executive order by the president is not the way to achieve this. Real advances on uniting working people regardless of where they happen to be born can only be won through debate, discussion and mobilization of working people.

Likewise the Obama administration's May 13 directive mandating that anyone can use whatever bathroom or locker facilities they want based on how they "self-identify" is no step forward. It's an attempt by the "smart" people to bypass debate by simply ordering those they consider "uneducated" and "uncosmopolitan" to comply.

While tremendous gains have been made as more women have entered the workforce and proven they can do the same work that men do, women are still an oppressed sex. As the *Militant* pointed out in the article Nimtz cites, directives of this type undermine the right of women to have privacy in bathroom facilities, and do nothing to aid the fight against discrimination in job, housing and education against those who consider themselves transgender.